
BENJAMIN F. BARRETT.

JANUARY 27, 1904.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOLLIDAY, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 3670.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 3670) granting an increase of pension to Benjamin F. Barrett, submit the following report:

This bill proposes to increase the pension of the soldier named therein from \$6 to \$24 per month.

A similar bill was favorably reported by your committee in the Fifty-seventh Congress at \$24 per month, but was amended by the Senate to \$20 per month. The Senate amendment, however, failed of action in the House owing to the close of the Congress.

The report of your committee of the Fifty-seventh Congress is herewith.

Your committee concurs in the Senate amendment proposed in the Fifty-seventh Congress, and therefore reports the bill back favorably at \$20 per month, and recommends the passage of the same when it shall have been amended as follows:

In line 8 strike out the word "twenty-four" and insert in lieu thereof the word "twenty."

[House Report No. 2396, Fifty-seventh Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 14592) granting a pension to Benjamin F. Barrett, submit the following report:

This bill proposes to increase the pension of the beneficiary named therein from \$6 to \$30 per month.

Benjamin F. Barrett, the soldier named in this bill, now 60 years of age, who served as private in Company I, Third Missouri State Militia Cavalry, from April 1, 1862, to June 6, 1865, when honorably discharged, and whom the records of the War Department show to have been wounded in the breast and arms, severely, at the battle of Patterson, Mo., April 20, 1863, is now a pensioner under the general law at \$6 per month on account of this gunshot wound of the right arm and resulting neuralgia.

The last claim for increase and rerating, filed on February 26, 1900, was rejected June 26, 1900, upon the ground that the disability from the gunshot wound did not warrant a rating in excess of \$6 per month and that the ratings previously allowed were fully commensurate with the degree of disability arising from the pensioned causes.

Claims for pension under the act of June 27, 1890, were rejected, the last one on November 14, 1899, upon the ground that the claimant's inability to earn a support by manual labor, due to the wound of right arm, neuralgia, rheumatism, and resulting disease of heart, did not, under the provisions of said act, entitle him to a rating in excess of that which he was then receiving under the general law.

When last examined, on September 6, 1899, the board of surgeons at Louisiana, Mo., recommended a rating of \$6 per month for the wound of right arm, \$8 for chronic bronchitis, \$6 for general debility, and \$6 for rheumatism and resulting disease of heart.

There has been filed with your committee the affidavit of the beneficiary, setting forth that prior to his enlistment in the Third Missouri Cavalry he served in the Pike County, Missouri, Home Guards from May to September, 1861; that thereafter he served in Company K of Fagg's regiment Missouri Militia for six months, and the records of the Auditor for the War Department show that the beneficiary did serve in Company K, Fifth Missouri Militia (Colonel Fagg's regiment), from September 7, 1861, to February 8, 1862. This organization, however, was not in the service of the United States, but was purely a State organization; that while a member of the Third Missouri State Militia Cavalry, in the first part of 1864, he, with his brother, G. W. Barrett, was detailed to and did cook for and wait upon the smallpox patients, though neither of them ever had the disease; that as a result of the same he contracted sore eyes; that he also had catarrh of the head while in the service, and that as a result his hearing became greatly impaired; that he has been compelled to use glasses to read and write for about thirty years, and that for the last six or eight years he has been compelled to wear glasses continuously to distinguish one person or object from another; that he is now getting old, and that his disabilities increase every year, and that if justice had been done to him he would have been rated at \$12 per month from discharge on account of the disabilities contracted by him in the service.

The beneficiary also filed the testimony of Doctor Bland, of Vandalia, Mo., setting forth that upon examination of the beneficiary he found him suffering from gunshot wound of the right arm, entering the upper part of the lower third, continuing down to the elbow, causing great weakness and destroying the use of the arm; that he also suffers from weak eyes; has some valvular trouble of the heart, and chronic bronchitis, and that by reason of these troubles he is disabled for manual labor at least three-fourths.

The affidavit of Dr. H. T. Lewis, of Curryville, Mo., was filed with your committee, and sets forth that he has been the family physician of the beneficiary for twenty-five years; that at the present time he is suffering from gunshot wound of the arm, bronchitis, valvular trouble of the heart, and chronic neuralgic rheumatism affecting the right arm and shoulder, most probably the effect of the gunshot wound in the arm; that by reason of these disabilities his capacity for performing manual labor is diminished at least three-fourths, and that, in fact, he ought not to labor at all.

Other testimony filed with your committee shows that the beneficiary was compelled to wear glasses soon after his discharge from the service; that he has suffered from the effects of his wound ever since discharge to such an extent that he has been totally disabled for the performance of manual labor, etc.

The proof indicates that the soldier's impaired sight is traceable to his military service, and that, as stated by Doctor Bland, the wound of the arm and resulting neuralgia has almost destroyed the use of the arm.

In view of this an increase of the soldier's pension to \$24 per month is justified, and the bill is therefore reported back with the recommendation that it pass.